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No. XXII.

Description of an Indian Fort in the neighbourhood of Lexington, Kentucky, by C. W. Short, M. D. Communicated by Mr. John Vaughan, Oct. 4, 1816.

Lexington, Aug. 31, 1816.

SIR,

Shortly before I left Philadelphia, my attention was drawn by Mr. Correa (who by one month's residence in my country, learnt more about it than I had during my whole life) to an ancient work in the neighbourhood of this place, which I have but just had it in my power to visit, and the following sketch is the result of a slight survey I made of it. Knowing your curiosity on these subjects, I send it to you hoping it may not be uninteresting to you.

C. W. SHORT.

Mr. John Vaughan, Philadelphia.

Description of the Work and Explanation of the Figure.

(See Plate IX. Fig. 3.)

aaaa. The wall, 14,000 yards in circumference, made of earth raised from a ditch on each side—the ditch being generally deeper on the exterior. The wall for the greater part of its course seems to run on an elevated piece of ground; at *h*, however, it is overlooked by an eminence rising immediately from the bottom of the exterior ditch, to the height of six or eight feet more than the wall; this eminence has every appearance of being the work of nature. At *f*, on the contrary, the line runs on the side of a hill, sloping exteriorly. The wall is here formed of earth thrown from the outer side only, and its summit is on a level with the inner ground.—*c c c* are small gate-ways, opening towards the south, and are about six feet wide—*d* is another, ten feet, and *e* the main gate-way, fifteen feet wide. The wall in its circuit is broken in several places by ravines: those marked *g g g*, appear to have existed when the wall was formed, for it may be perceived descending to the bottom and rising from it. These ravines, when swelled by rains, empty their waters in different directions. The smaller hollows marked *h h*, have all the appearances of more recent formation, and seem to have washed away the wall in making a passage to the chief ravine *g*. At *i i*, there are two singular pits or excavations made on the top of the wall, about two feet deep, at present, and four or five in circumference. At these places the wall is evidently widened. The wall, in its highest part, (between the gate *d* and the ravine *g*,) is about ten feet from the bottom of the exterior ditch; its average height may be said to be five. A small part of the area from *j* to *k* has been in cultivation, and here the wall is almost obliterated by the plough; however it may be traced by the difference in the colour of the soil, the line of the wall being marked by a yellow clay. The thickness of the wall at the base may be eight or ten feet. The figure formed by it

is an irregular oval, its longest diameter being 500, and its transverse 400 yards long, comprehending an area of very uneven ground, the centre of which is perhaps higher than any in its vicinity; this is proved by the ravines, which make off in every direction from it. Nothing particular is perceived in walking through it, except about the centre a small mound or nodule two or three feet high, and a number of pits or depressions of the form of fallen-in graves. The whole ground is covered with timber of a large size, and of the usual growth in the neighbourhood—sugar maple, black walnut, white ash, hickory and beech. Those on the top of the wall and in the ditch, appear of an equal age and size with the others. There is no living water in the bounds of the lines, nor have any singular reliques been discovered about them.

Fig. 1.

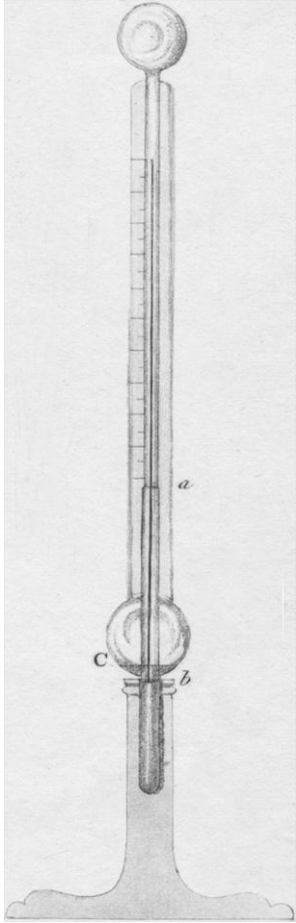


Fig. 2.

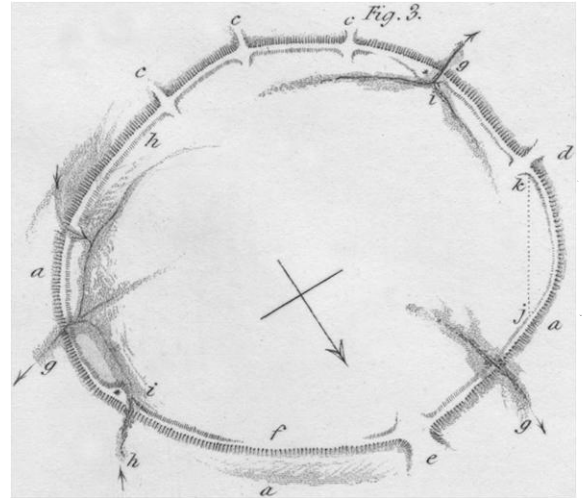
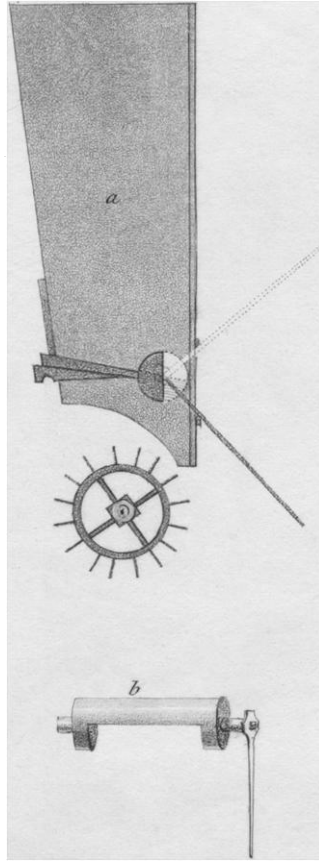


Fig. 4.

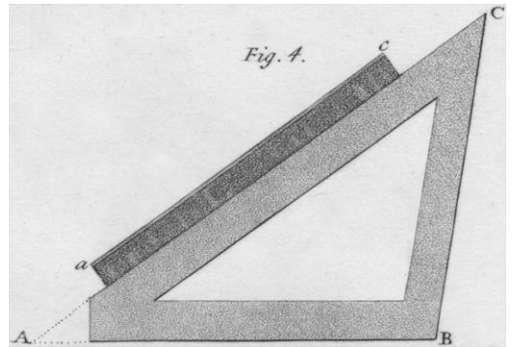


Fig. 6.

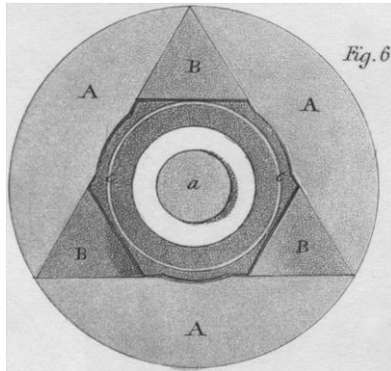


Fig. 5.

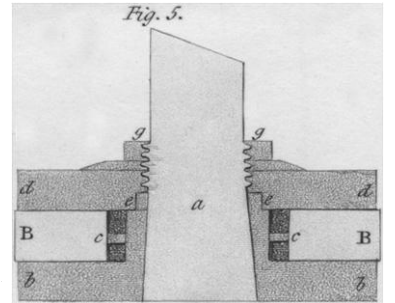


Fig. 8.

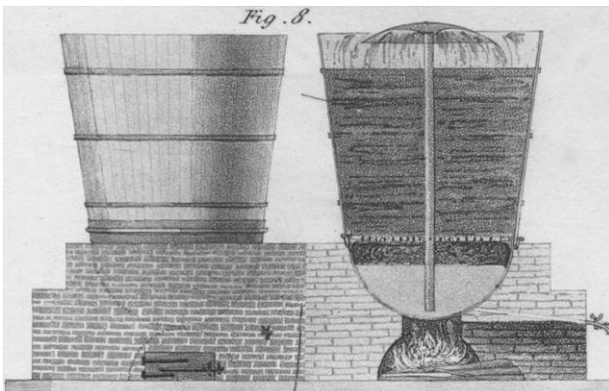


Fig. 9.

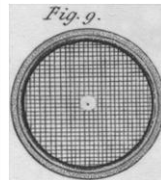


Fig. 7.

